

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 - 27 (Cancelled)

28. (Original) A computer-implemented method for receiving and processing communications according to a value, comprising:

determining whether the communication is associated with a frank, the frank corresponding to a value;

in response to determining the communication is not associated with a frank, processing the communication according to at least one default rule; otherwise

determining a class to which the frank corresponds;

in response to determining the class to which the frank corresponds, processing the communication according to at least one class-based rule.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of processing the communication comprises:

determining whether the frank corresponds to a class which is less than a specified minimum class; and

in response to determining the frank corresponds to a class which is less than a specified minimum class, discarding the communication.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29, further comprising the step of, in response to determining the frank corresponds to a class which is not less than a specified minimum class, transmitting the communication from a network node to a recipient system.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, where the communication is transmitted by way of at least one Internet service provider.

32. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of processing the communication comprises:

determining whether the frank corresponds to a class which is greater than a specified minimum class; and

in response to determining the frank corresponds to a class which is greater than a specified minimum class, discarding the communication.

33. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of processing the communication according to at least one class-based rule further comprises:

determining whether the class is less than a specified minimum class; and

in response to determining the class is less than a specified minimum service class, delaying delivery of the communication.

34. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of processing the communication according to at least one class-based rule comprises:

determining whether the class is less than a specified minimum class; and

in response to determining the class is less than a specified minimum class, placing the communication in a recipient-specified location.

35. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the step of processing the communication comprises:

determining whether the frank corresponds to a class greater than or equal to a specified minimum class; and

in response to determining the frank corresponds to a class greater than or equal to a specified minimum class, displaying at least a portion of the communication in a specified color.

36. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising:

determining whether a characteristic of a sender of the communication matches at least one entry on an approved list; and

in response to determining the characteristic of the sender matches at least one entry on the approved list, ignoring the step of processing the communication according to at least one class-based rule.

37. (Original) The method of claim 36, wherein the characteristic of the sender is one of an electronic mail address, a name, or an Internet protocol address.

38. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising:

determining whether a characteristic of a sender of the communication matches at least one entry on an approved list; and

in response to determining the characteristic of the sender matches at least one entry on the approved list, assigning a second class to the communication.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein the step of processing the communication according to at least one class-based rule comprises applying the class-based rule to the higher class of the class and the second class.

40. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein the communication is an electronic mail.

41. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein the communication is a telephone call.

42. (Original) The method of claim 34, further comprising:
receiving a second communication;
determining whether the second communication includes a second frank;
in response to determining the second communication does include a second frank, determining a second class to which the frank corresponds; and
determining a display order for the first and second communications, the display order based on the first class and the second class.

43. (Original) A computer-readable medium containing computer-executable instructions which, when executed, perform the method of claim 28.

44. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer-implemented software application~~ computer-readable medium containing computer-executable instructions which, when accessed, performs the method of claim 39.

45 - 58 (Withdrawn)

59. (Cancelled)

60 - 66 (Withdrawn)